

PARODIES REGAINED

EVOE



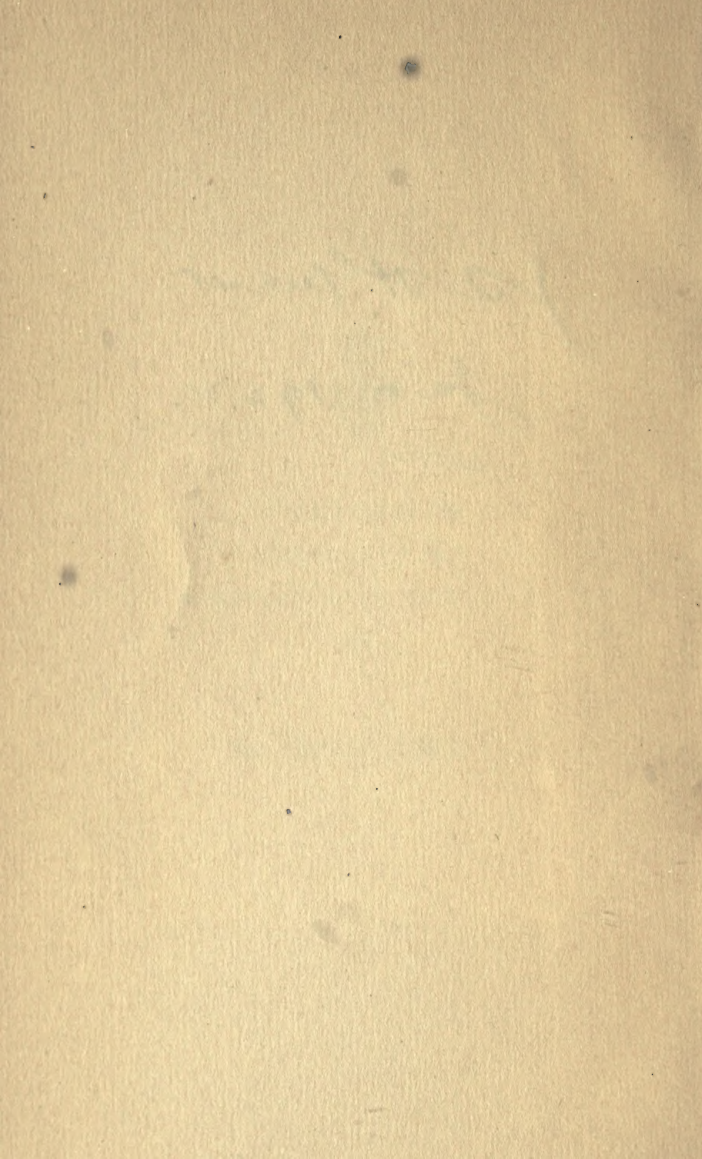


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PARODIES REGAINED



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A CHORUS OF ENGLISH POETS ENDEAVOUR TO INTERPRET
THE NATIONAL MIND

“**PARODIES
REGAINED**”

BY
EVOE

(E. V. Knox - of "Punch".)



**ILLUSTRATED BY
Geo. Morrow**

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PREFACE

AT the end of last year a well-known Member of Parliament criticized in the House of Commons the work of the present Poet Laureate, and proposed the selection of a national bard whose mind should be more attuned to the soul of the British nation. Either because an urgent demand for economy arose about the same time, or for some other reason, no Royal Commission was appointed as a result of this agitation, and no Cabinet Minister received a Portfolio of Prosody. The public, however, was not wholly satisfied. "What kind of stuff," they began to ask one another, "do these poet fellows write?" I have done my best to answer that question here, even to the extent of introducing one or two singers from outside the British Isles. Some of the subjects I have given to my

models are not perhaps quite those which they themselves would have chosen. I have lured them occasionally into expressions of opinion on the political controversies of the hour. But if politics be not the proper stuff of poetry, what are or is ?

All the verses in this volume have previously appeared in the pages of *Punch*, and to the courtesy of that journal I am indebted for allowing me to reproduce them in their present form.

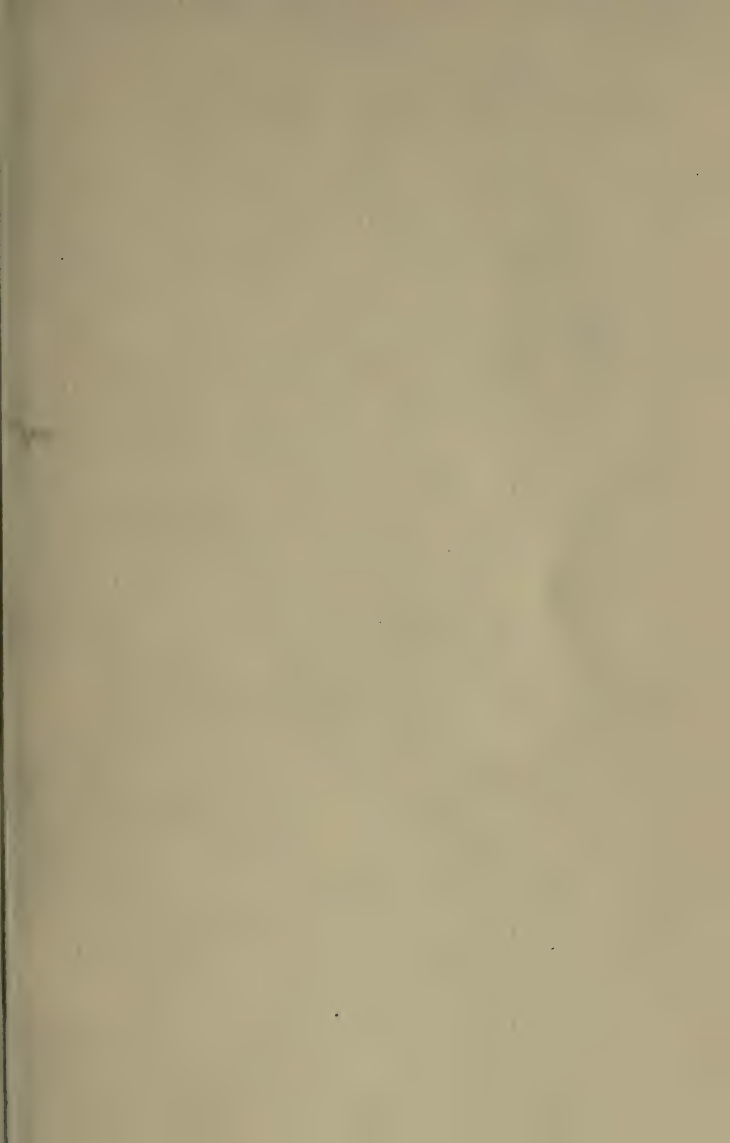
E. V. K.

BALCOMBE, *July* 1921

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111
(E.O.M.)

THE FOX BECOMES CONSCIOUS THAT FLEET STREET IS
ON HIS TRAIL

PARODIES REGAINED

TAFFY THE FOX

(Mr. John Masefield discusses the attitude of a certain section of the Press towards the Prime Minister.)

SAFE and snug from the wind and rain
In a thick of gorse with a tranquil brain
The fox had slept, and his dreams were all
Of the wild Welsh hills and the country's call ;
He slept all night in the Wan Tun Waste,
He woke at dawn and about he faced,
He flexed his ears and he flaired the breeze
And scratched with his foot some poor wee
fleas ;
He sat on his haunches, doubted, stood ;
To his left were the lairs of his native wood,
The deep yew darkness of Cowell Itchen ¹ ;
He flaired, I say, with his nostrils twitching,
Till he smelt the sound of the Fleet Street stunt
And over the hillside came the Hunt.

¹ Pronounced locally, " Kole Ishun."

Over the hillside, clop, clip, clep,
And the dappled beauties, Ginger and Pep,
Live Wire, Thruster, Fetch Him and Snatch
Him,
They were coming to bite him and pinch him
and scratch him,
Whimpering, nosing, scenting his crimes,
The Evening News and The Morning Times.
“Yooi ! On to him ! Yooi there !” Hounds
were in ;
He slunk like a ghost to the edge of the whin ;
“Hark ! Holloa ! Hoick !” They were on
his trail.

The huntsman, Alfred, rode The Mail,
A bright bay mount, his best of prancers,
Out of Forget-me-not by Answers.
A thick-set man was Alf, and hard,
He chewed a straw from the stable-yard ;
He owned a chestnut, The Dispatch,
With one white sock and one white patch ;
He bred the mare called Comic Cuts ;
He was a man with fearful guts.

So too was Rother, the first whip,
Nothing could give this man the pip ;
He rode The Mirror, a raking horse,
A piebald full of points and force.
All that was best in English life,
All that appealed to man or wife,

Sweet peas or standard bread or sales
These two men loved. They hated Wales.

The fox burst out with a flair of cunning,
He ran like mad and he went on running ;
He made his point for the Heroes' Pleasance,
By Hang Bill Copse, where he roused the
pheasants.

They rose with a whirr and kuk, kuk, kuk-
kered ;

The fox ran on with a mask unpuckered
By Boshull Stump and Uttermost Penny,
Where the grass was short and the tracks
were many.

He tried the clay and he tried the marl,
A workman's whippet began to snarl ;
Into the Dodder a splash he went,
All that he cared was to change the scent,
And half of the pack from the line he
shook

By paddling about in the Beaver Brook.

He swerved to the left at Maynard Keynes,
With an eye to sheep and an eye to drains ;
By Old Cold Smiley and Clere St. Thomas
Without any stops and without any commas ;
At Addison's Cots he went so quick,
He startled a bricklayer laying a brick ;
He ran over oats and he ran over barleys,
By Moss Cow Puddle and Rushen Parleys ;

By Lympne Sassoon and Limpet Farm
He scattered the geese in wild alarm ;
He ran with a pain growing under his pinny
Till he heard the sound of a war-horse whinny,
And tried for an earth in the Tory Holts.

The earth was stopped. It was barred with
bolts.

He turned again and he passed Spen Valley,
By Paisley Shawls and Leamington Raleigh ;
His flanks were wet, he was mire-beslobbered,
By Hatfield Yew and by Hatfield Robert ;
He tried a hen-coop, he tried a tub,
He tried the National Liberal Club—
A terrier barked and turned him out.

He tried the end of an old drain-spout.

It was much too small. With a bursting
heart
He thought of the home where he made his
start ;
His flanks were heaving, his soul despairing.
He flaired again—he was always flairing
To find the best way of escape and nab it,
He couldn't get out of this flairing habit ;
He felt at his back the fiery breath
Of the Kill Gorge pack that had vowed his
death ;

He turned once more for the shelter good
Of the Wan Tun Waste and the dark yew
wood,

The deep yew fastness of Cowell Itchen
And the scuts and heads of hens in his kitchen.
The hounds grew weak and The Mail was
blowing ;

Rother said, " Alf, this is bad going ! "
Past Pemberton Billing, past Kenworthy,
He shook them off, he was damp and earthy ;
By Molton Lambert and Platting Clynes——
But I can't go on with these difficult lines.

The night closed down and the hunt was dead,
Alfred and Rother were tucked in bed ;
The cold moon rose on a fox's snore
And everything much as it was before.



66.67

DAVID THE WIZARD SOOTHES A MIXED CROWD OF
APPLICANTS WITH A CHEERFUL CHORUS

THE DAVID JAZZ

(Mr. Vachel Lindsay, the American poet, also discusses what the Premier has called "the savage music of the Jazz band outside.")

(Beginning with a strain of "Dixie.")

OLD Man Alf was an ink proprietor ;
His voice was loud and never grew
quieter ;
He kept rude scribes in a monstrous den
To hammer on a gong at Cabinet men. .

*Hark to the Mail-horn, rail-horn, sale-
horn,*

*Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boomlay,
boom !*

*Listen to the Times-horn, chimes-
horn, crimes-horn,*

*Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boomlay,
boom !*

Pom, bing, pom !

*(With a touch of "Alexander's
Ragtime Band.")*

David was the chief hired man of the land ;
He ladled out the gold with either hand ;
He talked flap-doodle ; he beat upon his
chest ;
And David kept a-saying, " I done my
best."

(Chorus, please, audience.)

David kept a-saying, " I done my best."
David kept a-saying, " I done my best."

David was a wizard and he talked right
sweet ;
He had a little shack up in Downing Street ;
And *he* would let in whoever asked for
money,
Hoboes and hoodoos and everybody funny.
Mr. Winston Churchill leaves his card,
Nebuchadnezzar is waiting in the yard.
Here come the Philistines ; here comes Saul ;
Here comes Trotsky with his frightful gall ;
Here comes Fisher a-pleading for the chicks ;
Here comes Addison asking for a loan
And the *bricks*.

*(Here the audience shouts
" Bricks ! ")*

Here comes an Unemployment Measure,
Here comes a limpet looking for some
leisure ;
Here comes Pharaoh and here comes Mac ;
Here comes Eric with his railroad track ;

And the taxpayer cried, "We won't be bled,"
But David looked out of the window and
said :

*Hark to the waste-horn, baste-horn,
paste-horn, —
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boomlay,
boom !
Hark to the news-horn, mews-horn,
Jew's-horn,
Dulcimer, sackbut, psaltery and haut-
boys,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boomlay,
boom !
Pong, ping, pong !*

And some of the papers were kind to David ;
Some of them were nice while others ravéd ;
And this was sweet as molasses to the lips,
Lovely and pleasant as molasses to the lips ;
But Old Man Alfred was always grim,
And he said, "I will loose my scribe at
him."

So Alfred said to the scribes,
"Bite David ! Bite David !
Bite him ! Bite him ! Bite him !"

*(Here the Gentle Reader says
"Bite him !")*

Thus roared the scribes :
"Give us David, David, David !
Give us David, David, David !

Owoo, owoo, owoo, owoo, owoo, owoo !

Owoo, owoo, owoo, owoo, owoo, owoo ! ”

(Here the G. R. will kindly howl.)

And David did not worry,

David did not care ;

He kept looking up at the mountains

And out over the waters,

Waiting for the whale,

The whale of the Coalition.

(Reader. Look here, I don't understand.

First it was David, and then it
was Daniel, and now it seems to
be Jonah.

*Author. Yes, that's just the funny thing
about jazz-poems. Everything
does get mixed up like that.
Besides, there's a whole poem about
whales—golden whales—in one of
Mr. Lindsay's books.*

Reader. Oh !)

And the whale came up through the waters,

The whale of the Coalition.

What is the number of the big whale's
vote ?

Huge, huge, huge !

(Audience again, please.)

What is the nature of the big whale's throat ?

Huge, huge, huge !

(As before.)

And the whale swallowed David,

And the whale swallowed David,
And as he went down he said :

*Hark to the Mail-horn, wail-horn, fail-
horn,*

*Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boomlay
boom !*

*Hark to the growl-horn, howl-horn,
foul-horn.*

I shall come up again,

I shall come up again,

I shall come up again.

Ping !



[JOHN BULL MAKES NO REPLY TO THE YEO-HEAVE-HO-ING]
OF THE NAVY

SEA-COOK PIE

(Mr. Walter de la Mare takes an interest in politics.)

I. THE MOCKING NAVY

“**W**ON'T you look out for your Fleet, Mr.
Bull ? ”

Quoth the Navy, niggling, nagging in the
papers ;

“ Can't you look out for your Fleet, Mr.
Bull ? ”

Quoth the Navy, shouting madly in the
papers ;

But the old man's heart with cares was full,
And the Admirals seemed to have lost their
wool,

And never from his bedroom looked out Mr.
Bull

On the Navy yeo-heave-ho-ing in the
papers.

“ Oh, think about Trafalgar, you poor Mr.
Bull,”

Quoth the Navy, hauling bowlines in the
papers ;

“ Have you quite forgotten Drake, then, you
poor old Mr. Bull ? ”

Quoth the Navy, dancing hornpipes in the
papers ;

But times were hard and his head was dull
And the slump in trade had begun to pull,
And out of his old night-cap never answered
Mr. Bull

The Navy scribbling - scrabbling in the
papers.

II. P'R'APS NEVER

Will he ever be weary of talking,
The eloquent one ?

Ever weary of dealing in day-stars,
Where day-star is none ?

Will ever a shepherd arise
On the mountains of Wales,
And lead all the lambs to his fold
With no loss to their tails ?

Will ever the Talker come down
To a grip with the facts,
And feed us more seldom with moonshine,
More often with Acts ?
Will he take us all up in his ship,
Steer us and sail us far
Where the fortunate islands fit
For the Heroes are ?

III. SEA FOLK

The rates are sharks with pirate maws ;
The income-tax has lobster claws ;
Poor householders (and such am I)
Float up and down like herring-fry.

Firm as a rock whose crown is set
O'er watery wastes unfathomed yet
The State's blind slippery roots pierce deep
Where limpets sleep, where limpets sleep.

IV. QUESTIONS

Who said, " Sea-cook pie " ?
 The first mate to the bo'sun ;
Who said, " Coming down " ?
 Garters to hosen ;
Who said, " What does it mean ?
 Sheer extravaganza " :
I did ; one has to get
 On with the stanza.

Who said, " We'll keep it dark " ?
 Lloyd George to someone.
Who said, " Dressed crab for dreams,
 You'll get a rum one " ?
Who said, " All Time's delight
 Lives in a song, provided
The metre's charming and the words " ?
 Probably I did.



JOHN LINKWATER CONSIDERS THE WISDOM OF BIDDING
FAREWELL TO THE COTSWOLDS AND CHARMING
THE INTELLECT OF OUR COUSINS OVERSEAS

FIDELITIES ; OR THE LIFE OF JOHN LINKWATER

(A study of the Gloucestershire School.)

DEEMING the Cotswolds were insufficiently loved

When you compared them with Devon or
Dorset or Sussex,

Although the Ordnance Survey had mapped
them completely,

Noting the spot-levels, bench-marks and
good brown roads,

Metalled and unmetalled, contours and wind-
mills and windpumps,

Green woods, blue rivers and churches with
towers and spires,

From Gloucester to Cirencester (kindly pro-
nounce it as Ciceter)

John Linkwater loved them. Often he praised
them in rhyme,

Rhyming the cloud-chequered meadows quite
freely with shadows

Like most neo-Georgian poets, and often in
blank verse,

If one can call it blank verse, such as
this is,
And was famous about the West. He knew
all the pigs
In Gloucestershire vales, and had counted the
patches on them,
Dove-coloured pigs, and how in the Bicester
brakes
Violets flourish profusely year after year,
While the Birmingham brakes are chockful of
cherry-bangers.
This was one of the songs that John Link-
water sang :

THE PARISH PUMP

We stand at the Tarlton pump and are quite
contented
And proud of our little fates ;
The inn is ours, and the church and the vestry
meeting,
And the gas and the local rates.

The stars are all ours, and the moon, and the
changing seasons,
And beetles and bats and flowers ;
What do we care for Lloyd George and the
brothers Geddes,
Empires and Powers ?

THE LIFE OF JOHN LINKWATER 21

All of us only live for a poor brief moment,
And afterwards where are we ?
Whisper the word " Pork " to the flame of a
candle
Quite softly, and see.

For in eighteen hundred and fifty most likely
the poets
Sweetly and delicately said
(Very much as I have), " Who shall remember
Those that are dead ? "

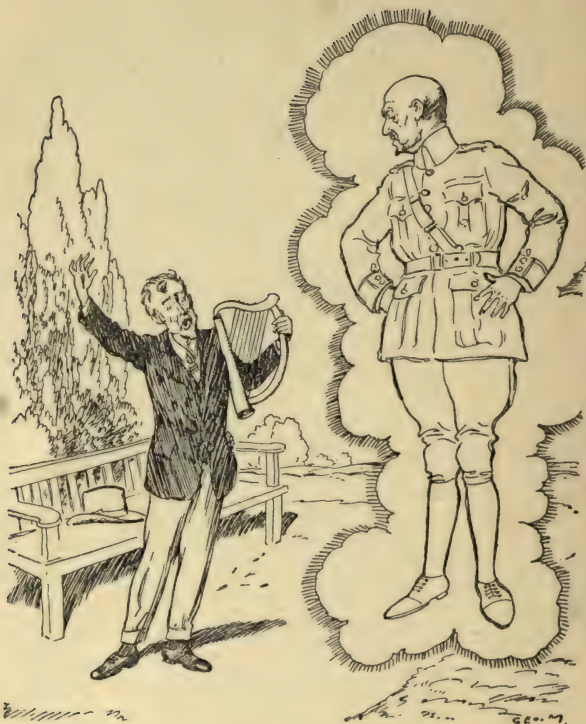
And in nineteen hundred and fifty it may be
the singers
Shall sing the same song anew,
Not exactly knowing, but pretty well guessing
That I did too.

.
But after a time John Linkwater grew tired
Of singing of Gloucester and Bicester and
Ciceter,
And the rattling harness of plough-teams and
village inns,
And the sweetness of Lynch and Oakridge
when compared
With the poms and vanities of this wicked
world ;
And, whether because of the coming of Presi-
dent Wilson,

Who everyone thought was certain to be the
goods,
Or whether because the English drama was
moribund,
Turned his thoughts westward farther than
Malmesbury
And wrote a play all about Abraham Lincoln,
Who seemed to him to be a thoroughly white
man,
Whiter than the limestone upon Cotswold
hills.
And the play prospered and was followed by
others,
And led to a lecturing tour in the U.S.A.,
And another one after that. And John Link-
water found
That, small though his care for the Empire
or even for England
Outside Sheet 105 of the one-inch map,
There is much to be said for a broader view of
humanity
And houses consistently full. And I hear he
has written
Plays upon Oliver Cromwell and Mary Stuart,
Both of them thoroughly popular well-known
figures
In Bicester and Birmingham and Boston
too,
Which proves that, though parish pumps give
a great nobility

THE LIFE OF JOHN LINKWATER 23

To the songs of the singers who sing from
Gloucestershire,
There's a wisdom biding also in making a
play,
Especially one on a sound historical subject
Likely to charm our cousins overseas.



THE POET-LAUREATE IS ROUSED TO ENTHUSIASM IN
ADDRESSING GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO, POET AND
MAN OF ACTION

BRIDGES TO ITALY

(A wholly fantastical monologue inspired by the abdication of Gabriele D'Annunzio, poet-aviator, and temporary tyrant of Fiume.)

SCENE.—*A garden on Boar's Hill. The English POET-LAUREATE speaks.*

COMRADES, leave me here a little ; all
my heart is filled with song ;
I shall be here very likely when they sound
the luncheon gong.

I propose to change my metre, with its curious
rise and fall,
For the simpler, homelier stresses utilized in
Locksley Hall.

Tennyson, whose taste was awful and whose
style my heart resents,
Touched a livelier chord than I do over
topical events ;

So for once I mean to ape him and compose
a little thing
On the wounded Roman eagle trailing there
his broken wing.

*(Turns towards Italy, strikes harp
and continues.)*

Tuscan poet, thou who sangest fame and love
and fiery wits,
Author, I am told, of stories full of most
voluptuous bits ;

Thou whose various publications date from
1889,
All the charm of all the *divas* flowering in a
lonely line ;

Airman, playwright, Empire-builder, whom a
small Italia irks,
Wielder of the funniest sceptre ever seized in
human circes ;

I salute thee, Gabriele ! I am grieved about
this blow,
Ace of all the furious aces, slightly bald
D'Annunzio !

Bald ! but on thy brow what laurels ! thou
hast made the air thine own—
Realms that Dante never dreamed of, flights
that Virgil left alone ;

Could they scour the empyrean, see the world
a map unrolled,
Make a practicable joy-stick from the shadowy
branch of gold ?

Oh, my cousin, eagle-hearted, often have I
longed to soar
With thee on thine airy journeys, swoop with
thee from shore to shore.

Help thee with thy ships and legions, bid thy
battle-flag unfurl—
Better stunting over Fiume than a cycle in
the Turl.

Often have I dreamed of swapping turn by
turn the pastoral flute
Whilst we did a spinning nose-dive or ex-
plored the seas for loot ;

Tired at last the sun with singing and returned
to graver cares,
Publishing our twofold edicts side by side on
curule chairs.

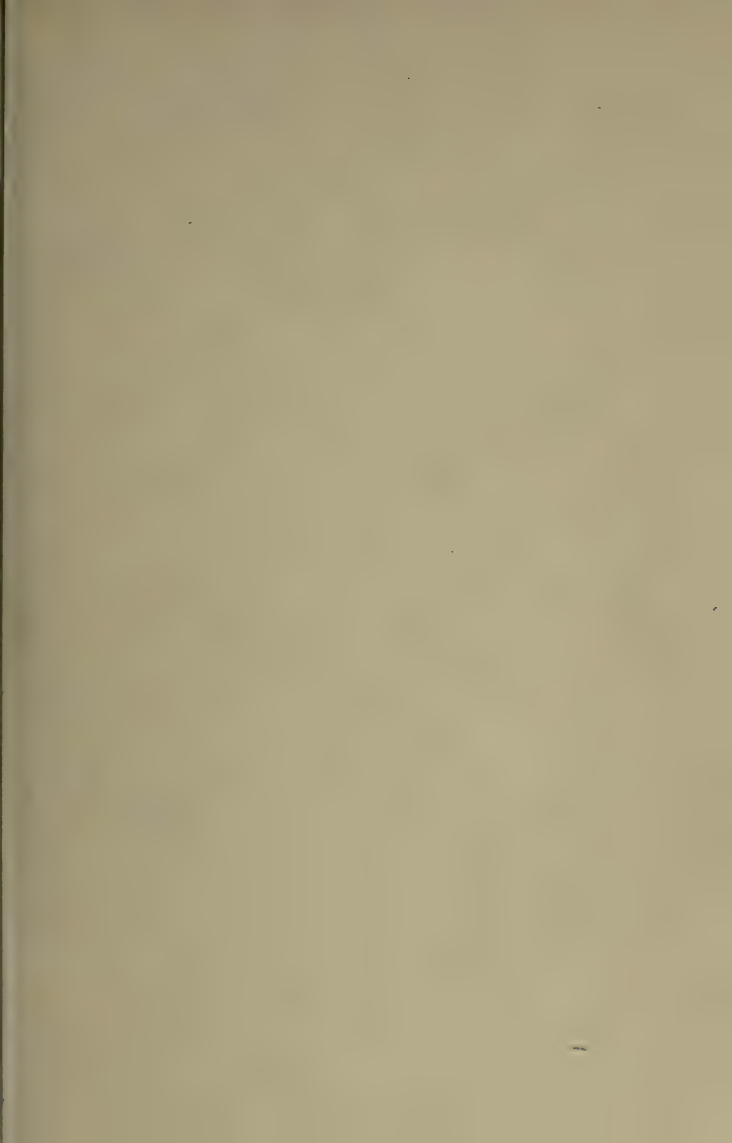
Late, too late the dream ! A something
chillier in the Northern blood—
Fear, perhaps, of influenza—nipped this pro-
ject in the bud ;

Still, if there are those who cavil and deride
my dreamier muse,
Counting it a bit too high-browed to express
the people's views,

Long to make me catch some portion of thy
fiercer spirit, seize
Cambridge, gut it, and establish sweet girl-
graduate degrees,

Let them know that all the morning I have
paced this sandy drive,
Calling on thee, Gabriele, master of the
falcon's dive ;

Vowed that if thy heart is planning even now
some desperate blow,
Toughest of the Italian poets, I will be thy
G.S.O.





THE VORTICIST POET BANISHES HIS SADNESS WITH THE
VISION OF TOASTED SCONES

SPOKES : OR AN ODE ON EBULLITIONS
OF ECCENTRICITY THAT OUGHT
TO HAVE BEEN OVERCOME IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD

(This is an attempt to imitate some of the younger poets who write in "Wheels": only I have put it into a Wordsworth measure because I thought it would be easier.)

I HAVE a mind where meadow, grove
and stream

And common things like cats and
bricks

To me do seem

Much as they might to lunatics,

The strange hallucinations of a dream.

Prosaic persons think I am a bore :

Think whatso'er they may,

I see and say

That *is* a pea-green monkey climbing up
the door.

The rainbow comes and blows

A cornet to the rose ;

The moon amidst the night
Shrills louder than the trombone's blare ;
Waters from a topaz height
Let down their turquoise hair ;
And songs of birds are ripened fruit,
And shadows creak through woodlands
sleek—
In all that shimmering uproar why must I be
mute ?

Now, while the sharp falsetto of the rain
Shampoos the bleak and bistre square
And all seems lone and bare,
A crimson motive flaunts upon the breeze,
A parrot voice reiterating " Teas,"
And I feel well again.
The clockwork buses move towards the
Strand ;
And there are golden-ceilinged cafés still,
And penny toys are sold on Ludgate
Hill,
And bales of incense come from Samarcand ;
Things are not really bad ;
My crackling thought
Munches the future like an ought,
And how shall I be sad
When toasted teacakes can be had ?
Ye glittering ones
Pounce round me, let me see ye pounce, ye
panther-hearted buns !

Ye buttered crumpets, I have heard the
call

Of crocodile to crocodile,
In amorous morasses near the Nile ;
And seen the crested lizard scrawl
“ Tarzan ” on a temple wall,

Or, if I have not seen, I dreamed—I dreamed
it all.

O hapless day ! if a critic
Should breathe some word of
annoyance,

Marring my joyance,
In a world paralytic
And plumed and tense,
And ask what in thunder can be the
sense

Of sound-waves—and still the words out-
pour

As the babble of children when they
roar

“ Hurray ! Hurray ! It is my birth-
day ! ”

Yet fears I have, not frequent,
when

I gaze upon the books of bygone
men,

That make me ask, “ *Is mine a poet’s*
pen ? ”

The primrose at my feet
Takes up the awful bleat ;

And "Yes, it is, it is, it is!" I
scream ;

"Give me more cake—more cake and
lots more cream."

Then come from mountains high and hear
my prayer,

Ye Muses with the waspish golden hair
And faces lovely as warm apricots,

Woolly and freckled over with brown
spots,

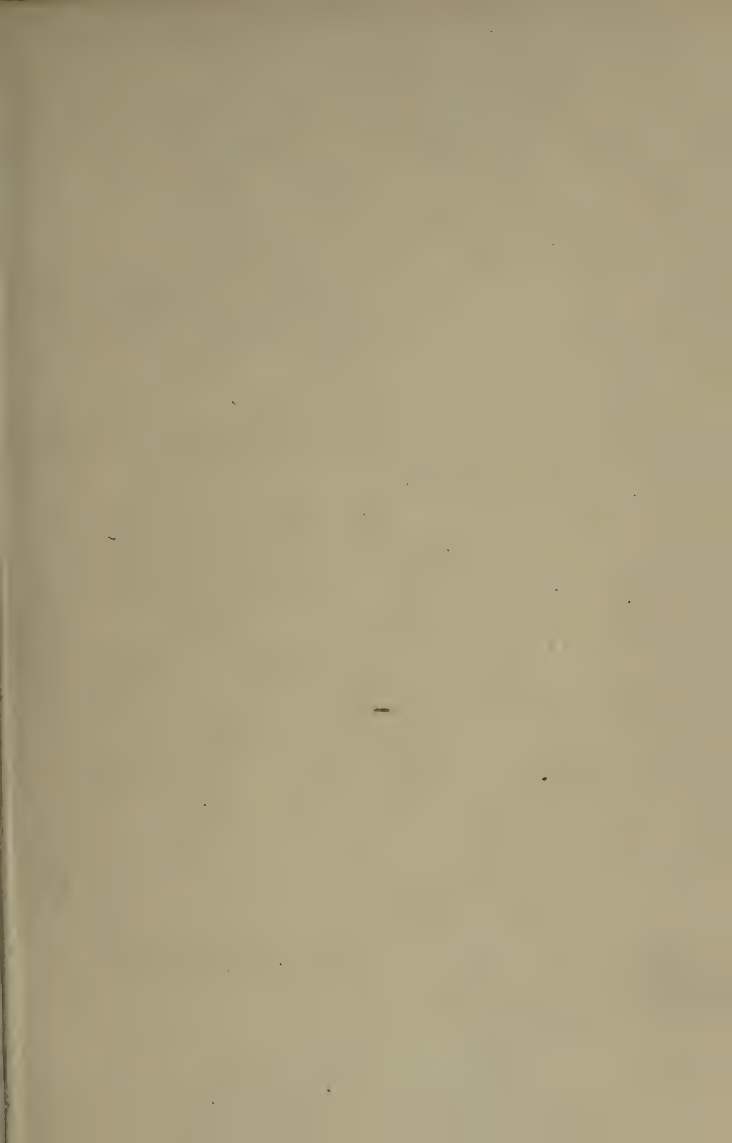
And plump as bird-song in a bush of
may,

And lead me under yak-haired deodars
That eat the fretted orange of the day,
To find flamingoes, rising a pink spray,
And warm as stars ;

And let me listen to the creaking moon
And hear the brittle laughter of the
breeze

Patchouli-scented as a blonde marquise ;
And publish me at once, and publish
soon.

Thanks to the vogue of Futuristic things
And constant tumult of a negroid band,
To me a chocolate *éclair* often brings
Thoughts that not even nurse can under-
stand,





650. 7.

MR. JOHN FREEMAN DISTINCTLY PREFERS AN IDEAL
LOVE TO ANY DEFINITE KIND

GO

(In very distinct contrast to the school of poets who like their images clear, angular, loud, glittering and grotesque, is that other school of the wistful, the dreamy, the unsatisfied and the faint. A good example is to be found in the muse of Mr. John Freeman, whom we have tried to copy in the rather lengthy, but oh, how beautiful, poem which follows. It is sure to waken a responsive thrill in the breast of many a young lover.)

GO
I would not that you should stay ;
Your lips and your eyes confound me ;
I want you to go away
And not keep coming around me.

There is a love of the mind
That holds, never loosens,
More sweet than the bodily kind
And much less of a nuisance.

In the cool white clouds,
In the lingering rivers,
Where a shrouding enshrouds
And a quivering enquivers ;

In the brush of bird-wings
And the brown of beech-hedges,
And in all shadowy things
With indefinite edges ;

In pale dreaming flowers
And quiet dropping petals,
In the grey stirless hours
And the stings of dead nettles ;

In a bright glimpse, half seen,
That flashes and tosses,
And the faint yellowing green
Of quaint mellowing mosses—

There's a nearness more near
And a closeness more present
Than when sights are too clear,
Too well seen to be pleasant.

Love is a dark fire
Burning ever and ever ;
Desire breeds desire,
Dreams heighten heart-fever ;

But love fades at a touch
And grows cool and less dizzy—
Don't come here so much ;
Can't you see I am busy ?

We should glimpse and pass on
And remember the glimmer,
Like a pool that grows wan
When the twilight glooms dimmer ;

But you creep so close
When I crave but your image ;
Kissing makes me morose,
It resembles a scrimmage.

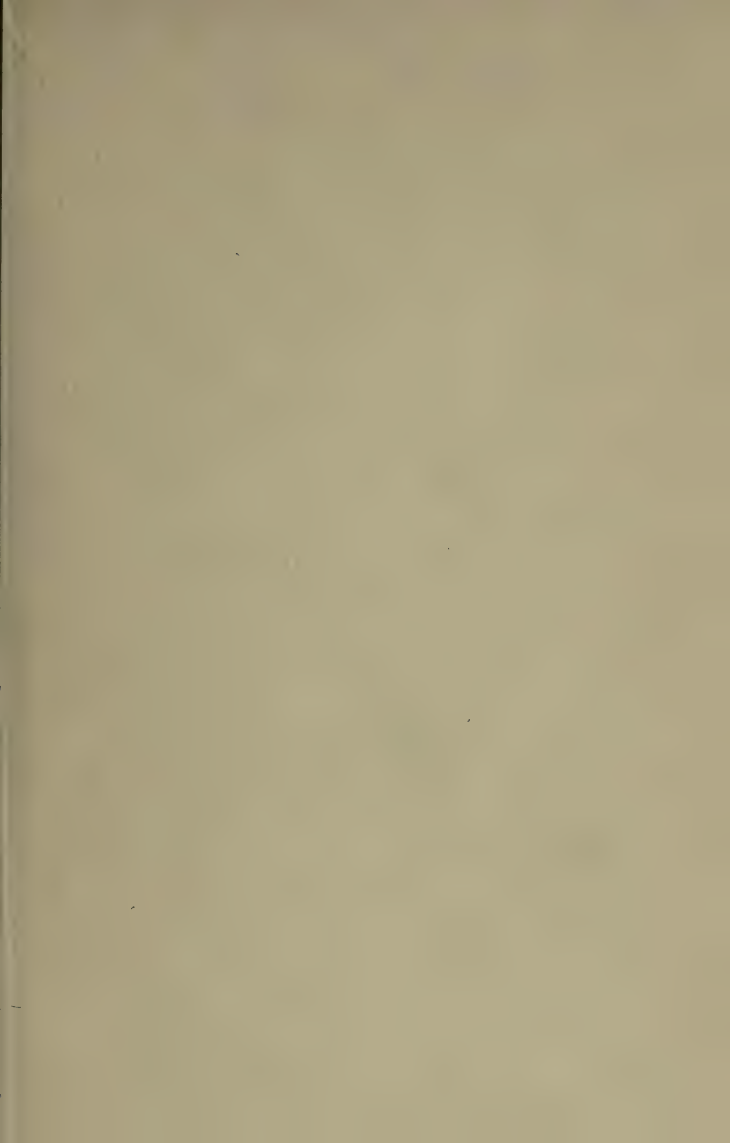
In the pale cold sky
Is a flutter of starlings ;
Bare twigs clash on high
With petulant snarlings ;

Faint buds, as in doubt,
Peep from under the bramble ;
I want to go out
For a long country ramble.

In the smoke of my pipe
I would hold you for keeping
In a half-thought, half ripe,
Recollecting and weeping.

I would make you my own,
Blossom sweet and enthralling,
But alone, but alone . . .
And you *will* keep on calling.

What was fire in the brain
Turns, touched, to a statue ;
Don't come here again
Or I'll set the dog at you.
Get away . . .





THE BOLSHEVIST LOVER COMPLAINS ALOUD OF THE
FAITHLESSNESS OF KATKA (OR KATE)

THE TRYST

(The recent translation into English of "The Twelve," Alexander Blok's famous Bolshevik poem, of which two million copies are said to have been distributed in Russia, is certain to exercise an influence on poetry in this country, probably in the direction of still greater licence of language and freedom from metrical laws. For fear of frightening the reader I have tried to show how a Victorian poet might have handled a Russian love-idyll of the present day without offending Victorian canons either of taste or of prosody. It ought perhaps to be mentioned that the translation of "The Twelve" is pleasingly illustrated by drawings in the most difficult Futurist manner.)

COME into the garden, Kate,
For the green rat visions go ;
Come into the garden, Kate,
I am standing here in the snow ;
And the seeds of the sunflower¹ will not
wait
And the vodka is getting low.

¹ Russian workmen habitually chew dried sunflower seeds.

For the dawn is beginning to drag
His banner of hope on high,
And the stars and moon may be fain to lag,
But the stars and moon must die
When the dawn comes up, like the People's Flag
Blood-red on the eastern sky.

All night long have I fired
Rifle-shots over the town,
All night long till I fainted and tired,
Have the drinks gone down, down, down,
Till I fainted and fell with a coat bemired
And a lump like an egg on the crown.

I said to the lamp-post, "Tell me how
I came to be here in the dirt,
When Katka ¹ is dancing, dancing now,
Katka is playing the flirt,
The tavern windows are vomiting row ;
She is dancing there for a cert,
My rosebud girl with a hexagon brow
And a rectilinear skirt."

I said to the moon, "The night goes soon ;
Katya ² is false to me ;
She is mine from her pointed head to her shoon
By a Soviet law's decree,
And she flirts with Petka, the lousy loon,
And Vanka the bourjoo-ee." ³

¹ Russian for Kate. ² Another Russian for Kate.

³ Popular mispronunciation of the word "Bourgeois."

And the face of the lamp said, "Follow,
follow,
Be true to the people's will ;
Don't lie there in the dirt and wallow,"
And the moon said, " Kill, kill, kill " ;
So I killed them and buried them here in the
hollow,
The hollow behind the hill.

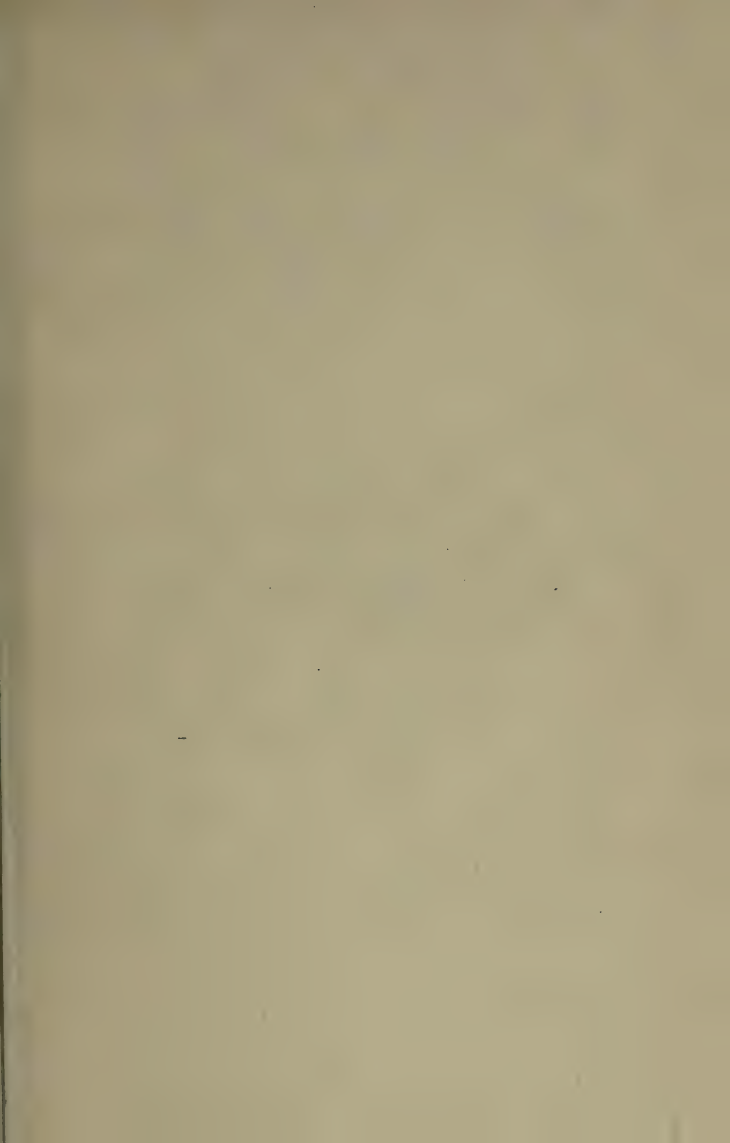
I waited for both of them out in the
street
And I shot them between the eyes,
And buried them here where your arching
feet,
That are so much like your eyes,
May tread on them always when we meet
In our garden of paradise.

The vampire bats in the lofty pine
Scarce stirred from their nests to see,
For Petka was merely a friend of mine
And Vanka a bourjoo-ee.
Now hushed and still is the were-wolf's
whine ;
Come out to the trysting-tree,
And the sunflower seed shall be thine, all
thine,
And the vodka reserved for me.

There has fallen a lump of ice
 From her window-sill on to the road,
She shall be in my arms in a trice
 Were it never so huge a load.
The sleigh-bells sing, "She is nice, she is
 nice,"
 And the wind howls, "Quite the mode";
But the carrion-crow calls "Cockatrice,"
 And the screech-owl answers "Toad."

She is coming ; I hear, I hear
 Her rhythmical rhomboid tread ;
I am feeling uncommonly queer ;
 My eyes see nothing but red—
See only the Soviet rose sprung clear
 From the dust of centuries dead.
*Trak-tak !*¹ . . . I must bury you, Kate, my
 dear ;
 My bullet has gone through your head.

¹ Noise made by the discharge of a Russian rifle.





A PARTY OF SUSSEX SINGERS SEEKS THE HIGH WOODS

SUSSEX—I

A DIALECT SONG

(Mr. Hilaire Belloc has written a great deal about Sussex both in prose and poetry, but for some reason has never written in the Sussex dialect. I have endeavoured to repair this strange omission in the little poem which follows.)

WHEN I goood into Midsheeres
So stoächy and so greay,
I tuk my pipe of an evenin',
I sat and smoked my cleay,
And the gurt ales of the South Country
I rackollacted they.

The gurt ales of the South Country
Be brewed a-nigh the sea ;
It puts me in good harness
When drinking they I be,
An' the chaps as wur lads when I wur
a lad
A-drinking along wid me.

The sheere-men of the Nor'-sheeres
I seed um for a while ;
Their land wur naun but tussicks,
The smutch wur on their sile ;
And the mothery ¹ sort of stuff they drink
It be mortacious vile.

The sheere-men of the Westsheeres,
'Tis there the Sivern goos
A-rolling down the apses' leaves
More quicker'n what the Ouse ;
They have the tar'blest kind of tales,
And the sweetest kind of booze.

But the men that live in Sussex
Be the bettermost men sure-ly ;
The spring it makes them gansing ² gay,
An' the beer they sells thereby ;
The Sussex malt and the Sussex hops
They racken to make us spry.

I niver goos into ale-house
Where ale be purty strong
But I thinks to be in Sussex,
The pleâce where I belong,
An' I sets me down on a settle
An' sings a Sussex song.

¹ Mouldy.

² Cheerful.

I niver could find a foundle,¹
Nor a broke thing noways mend,
An' I'm feart I shall disremember
My way home in the end,
For 'tis dark coming over bostal,²
An' road do just about bend.

I will cardenly gather a mort of friends,
So many as iver I may ;
Of men as can count the Sussex moons
An' walk in the Sussex cleay ;
They mun ivery one catch a holt on me,
They mun all go home my weay.

An' happen we'll come to high 'oods
Up nover an' on to hill,
An' happen we'll fall in dew-pan
If path-way doan't keep still,
But we'll keep it up till the marnin'
Let be howsumever it will.

We'll keep it up till the marnin',
We'll sing till the break o' dee,
An' the chaps as wur lads when I wur a lad
Shall show what lads they be.

¹ A thing you find.

² A hill path.



THE SPIRITS OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE ARE MERGED IN
ADMIRATION OF "THE SUSSEX"

SUSSEX—II

PRAISES FROM FRANCE

(This is a song about Sussex translated by me from the French of M. Jules Castier. I am not very good at translating French, and it may be that I have missed here and there the haunting magic of the original. There are thoughts, if not expressions, in my rendering which seem to me, now that I have finished it, strangely reminiscent of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, and I have sometimes wondered whether M. Castier's poem was not itself possibly a translation. It is all very baffling, and the reader must judge for himself.)

THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX

ONE chooses the Baltic pine,
One chooses a glade of the Surrey,
Or well the deliberate flurry ¹
Of tropical palms in line ;
Each chooses aright,
But my bosom's delight
Is to love with no bitter decree
The gay sunshine where all blushes bright,
The Sussex soothed by the sea.²

¹ " Ou bien le frôlement discret."

² " bercé par la mer."

No passionate garden crowns,
 No valleyed forests upholster
 The thicket-coiffured hard bolster
 Rude and good of the downs,¹
 The cruppers which shadows tease,
 Which let see at the pearly pass,
 Over corsets of sombre trees,
 The blue spread bounty at grass.²

Without hedge or enclosure which cramps,
 Half-savage, but *chic* of frock,³
 The turf covers over the rock
 As it did by the Roman camps.
 Of combatants is there a trace ?
 Of who died steel against steel ?
 There rests the egregious place,
 The herb and the great sun's wheel.

The South wind skips to the steeps,
 The wing heavy once more of brine,
 There in a long brown line
 It is all the proud Channel that leaps
 The sea-fog itself retards,
 And, as if interchanging their throats
 To the sand which no eye regards
 The ship and the sheep sound notes.

¹ " Et nul bois vallonné ne vêt.
 La dune simple au dur chevet
 Coiffé d'épine rude et bonne."

² " La bonté bleue éparse aux prés."

³ " Bien dressé."

Not of water with us regales
Our large ravines without brooks,
But the dew falls down into nooks
There up, and it never fails ;
Nor are herbs, from which are presumed
The seasons at fall or rise,
Nothing than thyme perfumed
As the dawn at the paradise.

If I had the rest to share
I would see, all my senses steaming,
The thirty-nine shires well-seeming,
But there is not advantage there ;
You may have at your need
The Thames or the Tweed,
But me I shall choose, be it said,
The sun's steady eye
From Rake to Rye,
The Black Sandhill and Beachy Head.

I will go myself of it to West
Where the sand flies dissolute ¹ on,
Where the Giant of Wilmington
Is for earth a pillar to rest ;
I will go to the eastward verge
Where the Rother rolls to the tide,
By some antique walls of surge,
Our ports at the sanded pride.²

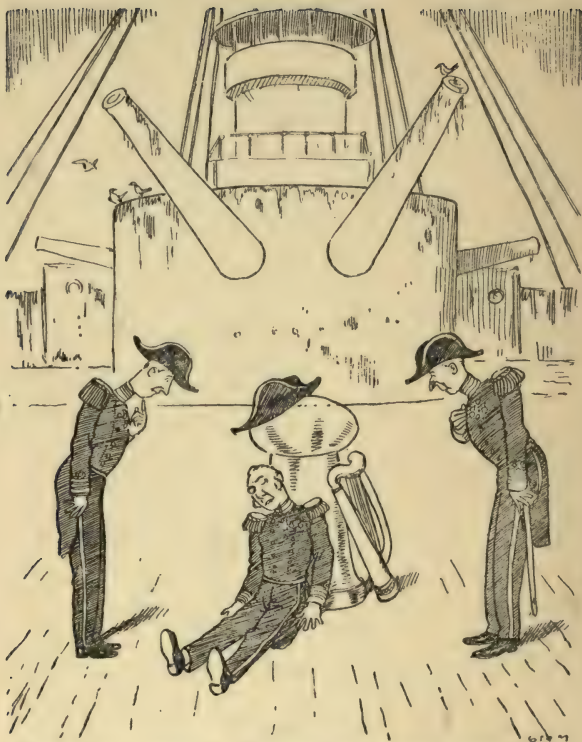
¹ " à l'abandon."

² " à l'orgueil ensablé."

I will go to the sun superb,
 To the North, to the valley brinks
 Where the old oaks stand, which one
 thinks

In our Sussex a morsel of herb,
Or well to the South, where one views
 The dauphins of golden crest,
Or black by the borders of Ouse
 Our clumsy oxen have rest.

God gives us the earth entire,
 But our hearts being pinched for space
 He makes for each one his place
Which he loves of a prouder desire,
 Each chooses aright,
 But my bosom's delight
Is to love with no bitter decree
 The gay sunshine where all blushes bright,
 The Sussex soothed by the sea.



A BRITISH ADMIRAL IS TROUBLED ABOUT THE OBSO-
LESCENCE OF CAPITAL SHIPS

THE DEIRDRENOUGHT

(Mr. W. B. Yeats presents dramatically his views on the battleship of the future.)

SCENE.—*The deck of an ancient ship, coloured grey, with many turrets and guns. The turrets and guns are covered with patches of red rust, and barnacles are creeping up the sides of the ship. All the persons of the play are dressed in threadbare blue and pale gold turning green. The sky and sea are full of mist. There is a large harp resting upon the binnacle. Leaning against the binnacle sits SIR PERCIVAL, half asleep, but muttering to himself. Near him are standing two Admirals.*

SIR PERCIVAL. O ! O ! O ! O ! I do not like this ship.

1ST ADMIRAL. What is the matter with Sir Percival ?

Why does he keep on saying, " O ! O ! O ! " ?

2ND ADMIRAL. Either the ever-living have
made him mad

Or else he dreams or else he is not well.
Perhaps he has eaten acorns, or
perhaps

Green apples from the Druid apple-
tree,

And the wild riders are upon his breast.

Speak to him. Ask him where he
feels the pain.

1ST A. Sir Percival !

SIR P. O ! O ! O ! O ! O ! O !

I do not like this ship.

(Half keening.)

Ohone ! Ohone !

1ST A. Why do you take exception to this
ship ?

It seems to me to be a capital ship.

SIR P. Ay, you speak truth. It is a capital
ship.

But I have seen strange creatures in
the air

Among the windy meadows of the
dawn,

Man-headed birds that fluttered round
the mast

And made a terrible whirring with
their wings

And wagged their fiery wings all over
me.

They held great stones like eggs
 within their claws
 That fell upon the deck and shattered
 it,
 And broke and shattered it with fly-
 ing stones
 Until the splinters leaped unto the
 stars.
 And I have seen strange creatures in
 the sea
 That rose up from the Country-under-
 Wave,
 Huge silver fish that ran against the
 sides,
 Driven by magic spells against the ship
 Out of the cold dark and the wool-
 white foam
 And bit the bulwarks and made holes
 in them
 Till there was nothing left upon the sea
 But only shining fishes underneath
 And the grey birds that circled in the
 air.

2ND A. That was a dreadful dream, Sir
 Percival.

Did you see anything else in your
 strange dream?

SIR P. Yes, I saw shadows floating round the
 ship,
 Ængus and Edain——

1ST A. Oh, I am tired of them !
Were there no later shadows in your
dream ?

SIR P. Deirdre was there and golden-armed
Iollan,
And old Bill Baile of the *Honey Mouth*
And Drak and Nellsen.

2ND A. Ah ! What did they say ?

SIR P. They wove a Druid spell upon the air
And made a song and sung it in my ears,
A song like this, " O ship, O ancient
worm,
Dragon to which we clave, by which
we swore,
You are obsolete, you are obsolete.
The shining fish
And troops of ash-grey birds have
broken you ;
The capital ship is doomed."

And then I woke,
And, waking, thought upon another
thing.

BOTH A's. Say on.

SIR P. This is a most expensive ship.
Look you how many kegs of silver
and gold,
How many O's preceded by a 1,
Seven O's, one 1, perhaps £10,000,000,
It takes to build a capital ship like
this !

For labour costs much more than in
the days

When Maeve was queen in many-
pillared Cruachan.

1ST A. He is right.

2ND A. It does.

SIR P. So thinking on these O's,
These many O's preceded by a 1,
I cannot sleep for crying, "O! O! O!
O! O! O! O!" I say we ought
to scrap
This ship which is becoming obsolete
And change ourselves to fishes and to
birds.

(There is a loud noise.)

1ST A. What noise was that?

2ND A. The rudder has broken off.

SIR P. I thought it would.

(There is another loud noise.)

Has the propeller gone?

2ND A. Ay, ay, Sir.

SIR P. Give me then my golden harp
And prop me up against the binnacle
And I will keen a letter to *The Times*,
The great shape-changers of our
destiny,
Saying that capital ships are obsolete.
*(He begins keening and the ship mean
while gradually falls to pieces.
The curtain sinks slowly.)*

THE YOUNG CHAMPION

(Mr. D. H. Lawrence puts a last charge to a by-election candidate into the mouth of a political chief after the passionate manner of "The Seven Seals.")

SINCE you must leave to-night and face
the poll,
Come, I will consecrate you for the tourney.

Doubtful about your chances? Nay, sweet
soul,
Sutherland says you are a cert. Lie back,
Smoke a cigar and gaze into my eyes;
For you are only half-sealed still and lack
The A1 hall-mark.

Let me hypnotise.
See, I have laid my palm upon your lip,
Touching it first with fiery eloquence,
And next with caution, that thereout may
slip
No damaging admissions.

There, 'tis done.

Fountains of pearls shall gush forth when you
speak—

Pearls of my own, and finer there are none—
Counselling peace and mild forgetfulness
For old stale hatreds. . . .

If a thing went well
You'll say, of course, we did it. If awry,
Asquith had laid on it some blighting spell,
Spoiling its chances. There must needs be
troubles

After a very great and terrible war . . .
(Nay, let us work.) Suppress these malice-
bubbles. . . .

The man who mocks or doubts us merely doubles
Our hard, hard task. . . . Shoulder to
shoulder stand. . . .

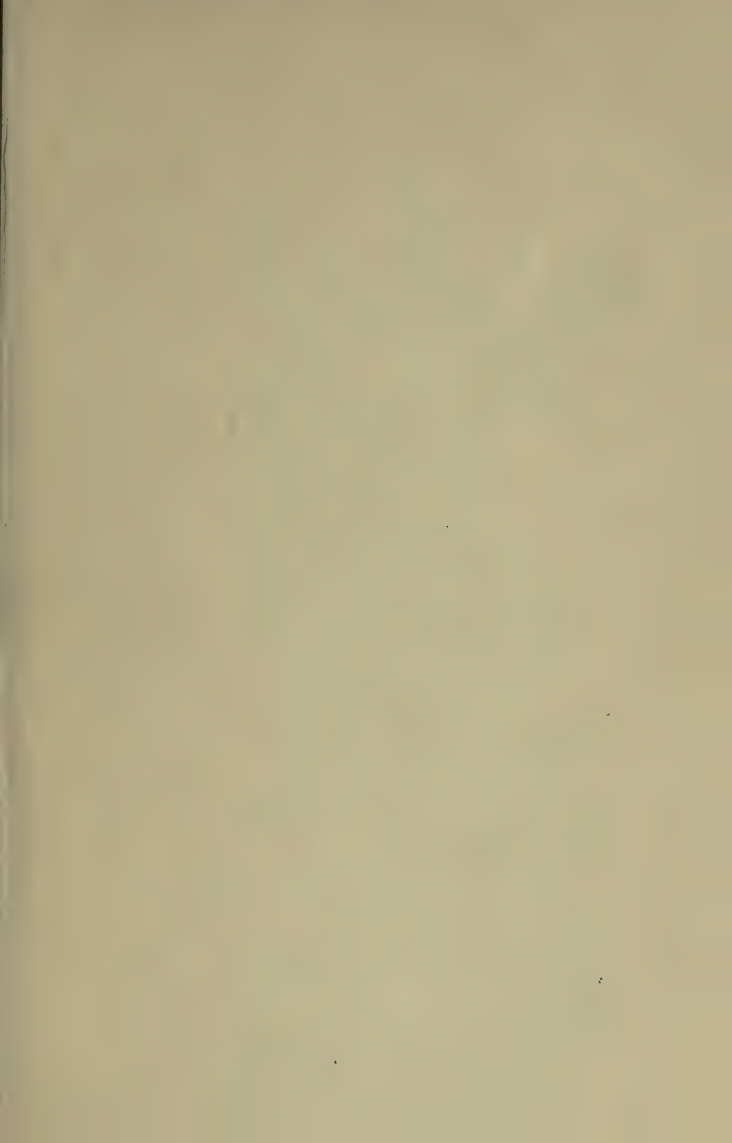
Labour and Capital working hand in hand. . . .
One Party. . . .

Have you got me? Good!

Then here,
Just at the V-shaped opening of your vest
And fastened by a slip-knot round your throat—
A talisman to guard you while you rest,
A sign, a token like the crimson seal
That stamps proprietary goods—I pin
Our Coupon. 'Tis the pass-word to the fort;
Nothing without this brand is genuine.

Now you are ready for the lists. The mort
Shall sound in Westminster before you fail.

But let me finish now and weave a mail
Of lightning passes round you, head to heel,
Touching your knees and thighs and breast
and arms,
Shirting you in a Cardigan of steel,
So that no sword can give you any alarms
And none say, "Such-and-such a man is he ;
He has this view, he holds that policy ;
We do not wish to take him for our Member."
But rather as a fly preserved in amber
Or prisoned in a tomb of marmalade,
A mote within my sweetness, a mere shade
I would have you go, wrapped up in mystery,
Merged and made one with indomitable Me.





MR. HOUSMAN'S ORPHEUS DEFENDS THE PRINCIPLE OF
LOCAL VETO

THE SINGING HEAD

(Mr. Laurence Housman deals with the problems of prohibition, under the guise of a new treatment of the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice.)

SCENE.—*The scene is a classic glade, with pine-trees dotted about on small hills, and in the centre a rocky cleft. It resembles, in fact, the drop curtain of a good many provincial theatres. ORPHEUS stands on the brink of this chasm. He is in marching order for teetotal minstrels, which consists of a service waterbottle slung over the left shoulder and a harp in the right hand.*

The rest of the dramatis personæ also differ conspicuously from those usually to be met with in an English pastoral landscape. On the one side is a CHORUS OF SHEPHERDS wearing tunics and on strike for a higher standard of pastoral song, and on the other a CHORUS OF BACCHANALS, principally dressed in snakes. Some of the older shepherds, notably DION, their grey-bearded leader, wear blue ribbons round their crooks,

but many of the younger men have taken to drink, which the Bacchanals are pouring out for them in vine-clad bowls. It is all very distressing and decontrolled. Strongly against the view of the majority, ORPHEUS is on the point of descending into the rocky cleft in search of the late EURYDICE, who, being a water-nymph, is apparently identified with Prohibition or, at any rate, Local Veto. She has perished owing to a spell of drought.

CHORUS OF SHEPHERDS (*in their best Swinburnian manner. And, by the way, I am not going to bother about the semi-choruses, though there ought to be a lot of these*).

Thou goest to death, O Orpheus—

O Orpheus, thou goest to death,
To the place where the dead men are
and, being dead, no longer have
breath ;

Where the voices of earth fall faint
and shade unto shade gives
heed.

Can no word of ours dissuade thee
from doing this fool-hardy deed ?

ORPHEUS (*striking his harp*).

Eurydice ! Eurydice !

(*A faint tinkle of water is heard below.*)

THE CHORUS (*trying again*).

Dark night that shall have no waking
Looms there where thy footsteps wend,
And with thunder the earth is
shaking ;

Thou goest, O friend,
On a dangerous undertaking
And one we can *not* recommend.

ORPHEUS (*harping again*).

Eurydice ! Eurydice !

(*He drinks from his waterbottle
and takes a step downwards.*)

PHALISSA (*leader of the Bacchanals, holding out
her goblet*).

Nay, drink of the vine-clad cup ;
Turn hither thine eyes,
And give that young personage up ;
O Orpheus ! be wise.

DION. Nay, turn him not from the slope ;
He seeketh a noble thing ;
He belongs to the Band of Hope ;
The truth at his feet shall spring.

(*ORPHEUS disappears into the cleft.*)

CHORUS OF BACCHANALS.

O Bacchus ! What insult is this,
What dreadful design ?
He has plunged in the night-black
abyss ;
He is seeking his Pussyfoot miss ;
He refuses the wine !

PHALISSA now mounts to a rock overlooking the cleft and, standing like a person on a seat at the races, begins to shout for the benefit of the others the latest news of the descent:—

He goeth, but vainly he goeth ;
The steps are terribly steep ;
He descends where no man knoweth,
Deep, deep.
Red-mouthed are the Furies around
him ;
They poke him and scream and
shout ;
He has asked to see Hades, and
found him.
He sings . . .

DION. What about ?

PHALISSA. Sweet is the sound of his lyre as the
sound of bees that buzz
In clover and cytissus meadows.

DION. Does Hades relent ?

PHALISSA. He does.

He has given his bride to him, you
can hear his thunder plain.

(Thunder is plainly heard.)

But he only gives her back if
Orpheus turns not again.

The voice of EURYDICE is now heard, saying faintly :—

Are you there, Orpheus ? Orpheus !

ORPHEUS. Yes, dear ; do hurry along.

EURYDICE. I can't, my dress has got caught.

ORPHEUS. Take hold of my harp and be strong.

(There is a loud splash of water, a crash of harp-strings and a muffled oath. Re-enter

ORPHEUS. He looks hot. He has lost his waterbottle and broken the strings of his harp.)

ORPHEUS. Will nobody give me a drink ?

PHALISSA. Ah, ah ! He is mine, is mine !

The victim, the god, the priest,

The giver of food and the feast.

He has asked for wine !

(The Bacchanals immediately rush upon ORPHEUS, crowning him with vine-leaves, and hustle him from the stage. PHALISSA remains behind shouting wildly.)

Io ! Io ! Bacchus,

Bacchus, Io ! Io !

DION *(rather crossly)*. Why do you keep saying " Bacchus " ?

It ought to be " Bacche."

PHALISSA. Base thrall to a word am I not, nor of language a lackey.

DION. But surely the vocative case of a second declension noun . . .

PHALISSA *(undaunted and waving her goblet to*

*and fro from the rock where she stands,
while the stage grows gradually darker).*

Now pressed in the cup is the grape
and the victims the vine-leaves
crown.

O Bacchus, the juice and the joy,
The wine from the must and the wood.

DION (*shaking his head sadly*).

These women have got at the boy ;
They are up to no good !

(*There is silence for a moment, and then in the
gathering gloom enter hurriedly a messenger.*)

CHORUS OF SHEPHERDS (*with traditional
acumen*).

See now, a man comes running who
looks as if he had heard

Most strange and terrible tidings.
Relate to us what has occurred.

MESSENGER (*breathlessly*). Orpheus is torn in
pieces !

CHORUS. Oh woe ! Oh horror ! Oh blood !

MESSENGER. They have torn his head from
his body and rolled it down in
the flood ;

But, a marvellous thing to mention,
although the body is gone

The head keeps shouting, "Eury-
dice !" exactly as though it
were on.

(All the Shepherds put their right hands to their ears and bend down. A faint far-away voice can indeed be heard shouting "Eurydice !")

CHORUS *(inquisitively)*. How can the voice keep singing, seeing the heart is dead ?

DION. Nay, do not ask me, I pray you.
My bosom is filled with dread.
Oh lead me afar from this doomed
And pitiful land of mine,
From the sound of this awful
Nemesis
To a nobler and better shore,
Where licences are no more
For the sale of beer and wine,
And spirits are not consumed
Either on or off the premises.

(Exeunt the more sober Shepherds, leading

DION. *Night, followed by the curtain, falls.)*



650.17

DAVID INFORMS THE WORLD THAT THE SHEEP ARE IN
THE GRASS AND THE COWS IN THE CORN

MOTHER GOOSE

(Mr. Robert Graves defends the Prime Minister in a
Ballad of Nursery Rhyme.)

WILD brambles may be plucked for tart
Or turned to jellies fine,
I like them best, untouched by art,
Straight from the woodland vine.

In unpremeditated streaks
Their purple should be spent,
To stain the little children's cheeks—
Which points my argument.

No statesman of the stodgier school
Is half so wise as he
Who nothing plans, but makes his rule
A wandering fantasy.

Then out upon that futile set
Of feeble-minded men
Who strive with palsied words to get
Two parties back again.

Who vainly round St. Stephen's buzz
And seek constructive links
Between the things a Premier does,
And those a Premier thinks.

But let the trombones and the drums
 Sound forth from either side
For George, who took from each the plums
 And kissed them when they cried ;

And knew that policies meant strife,
 And strife and feuds were wrong,
And made the keynote of his life
 One grand sweet nursery song ;

And bought a fiddle for eighteenpence
 And tried to make it play
“ I see the dawn, though night is dense,
 On Welsh hills far away ; ”

And jigged it now with Polish cat,
 And now with Tartar keen,
And sometimes gave the Frenchmen fat
 And sometimes gave them lean ;

And picked a peck of pickled grief
 When *Old King Cole* was king,
And stuffed a leg of Tory beef
 Into a bag pudding ;

And Liberal blackbirds by the score,
 Gammon and spinach too,
And, when the pie was opened, swore
 He heard the ringdoves coo ;

And told how wolf and bear and fox
Waylaid him in the wood,
But he was little *Goldilocks*
Or else *Red Riding Hood* ;

And tipped the wink to Bonar Law
And Guest and Younger gay,
And high above the old see-saw
Went gathering nuts in May ;

And kept a neat and handy list
Embroidered on his bib
Of Coalition Unionist
And Coalition Lib.

And now, though certain seats are lost
And certain things gone wrong,
And facts about the final cost
May spoil the fairy song,

For evermore in children's books
The story shall be told
Of how for years, by hooks and crooks
And wanderings manifold

By east and west, through vale and pass,
When David wound his horn
We knew the sheep were in the grass,
The cows amidst the corn,



MR. TURNER'S PARIS IS SMITTEN BY CALF-LOVE AND
TIPTOES THROUGH A WOOD

GLAMOUR

(Mr. W. J. Turner is stirred by the congested state of the Divorce Courts to remind us of the romantic circumstances attending the outbreak of the Trojan War.)

DEEP in the glimmer of a glooming glade
In soft, damp, shadowy moisture Paris
 played
With cobwebs and phantasmal butterflies,
And watched the lizards with their great glad
 eyes
Dart in and out like feathery gleams, and
 frogs
Drop into murmurous pools from mildewed
 logs,
Year after year. And now the Oread passed
Palely and plucking wind-flowers which she
 cast
Like stars amid the mosses; and Dryads
 came
And sat on toadstools, warm from some wood
 game
And golden orioles glimpsed among the trees
Dark-roofed above the spotted orchises,

And nightingales spilt large and liquid notes
Monotonously bubbling from sweet throats,
Making the whole place damper underfoot,
If possible, than ever. Paris put
Up with it fairly well. Moon-bound, the boy
Listened to Echo from the faint blue hill
Calling Narcissus, and Narcissus still
Yodelling to Echo by the fount's splashed
brim.

There he saw CEnone.¹ She swooned to him
Mist-like, and then he tiptoed through the
woods

Gathering pale flowers that grew beneath
faint hoods,

Presents for CEnone. Till on a while,
Wearying of her sad lips and snow-carved
smile,

And weary of wandering up and down so long,
And weary of a girl who scanned all wrong,
He left for Sparta.

Menelaus sat
Leaning by Helen, looking at the flat,
Fleckless, unruffled shining of the wave
Lipping low quays whereon the palace gave
(A great convenience). And now night came
on

In murmurous silence, and hot day was gone

¹ In my young days we always used to call her
CEnone.

From the pale olive groves. The Trojan
barque

Stood furled at anchor, darkling in the dark.
Huge was the hall, and principally made
Of porphyry, alabaster, bronze and jade,
And noteworthy for its large dining-room.
Paris, a guest within the oblonged gloom,
Where all the cups were carved with cold pure
shapes

Of boys and maidens eating unripe grapes,
Gazed upon Helen. All Troy's hope was
pawned
In that one love-look. Menelaus yawned.

Why didst thou warn her not, wild wandering
breeze,

What harm may come from incidents like
these,

How loveliness is a lure to sailor-men

And world's woe and disaster follow then ?

Long gazed they glimmering. In the opal
sheen

Later the Phrygian leads his moth-pale queen
Into the ship's dark hold. The mist-wreathed
bay

Whitens; the dawn gleams. They were gone
away.

Hoary with age and antique with old Time
The walls of Troy stood difficult to climb,

And all about them on the glittering plains,
Splashed with the blood of heroes and their
 brains,

White lay the tent-roofs of the warrior Greeks
Glinting. Ten years passed like so many
 weeks.

Meander and Scamander still rolled on,
But young Iphidamus, poor lad, was gone.
Coön expired, and Simoïseus fell ;
Cassandra, wild-haired in the citadel,
Raved, and saw Helen plunged in thought's
 abyss,

And sometimes asked strange questions such
as this :

“ When is an azimuth not an azimuth ? ”
And, Helen saying to calm her, “ When it
 doth,”
She shrieked, and went forth prophesying
 doom

All round the streets, which added to the
 gloom.

Troy's fallen, and now upon the amianth¹
 tide

Under the purpling morn may be espied
Sail after sail flit o'er the dream-swept
 pond,

Trireme by trireme, dromond by dromond,

¹ I haven't been able to find out what “ amianth ” means.

And penteconter after catafract ¹
All filled with Greeks returning closely packed,
And in one small dark barque, not feeling gay,
Wrapt in an old-gold veil, pale Helen lay,
Sent back to duty. And now the orb'd sun
 rose ;
The ten years' wanderings had reached their
 close.

Far in the mountains piped a shepherd boy
A song, part glimmering grief, part shimmering
 joy,
Particularly popular once in Troy :—

*From hill to hill
When shines the sun
I wander still ;
The days are hot,
The nights are not ;
We have no fun
When nights are chill.
Tra-la-la-la, ototoi, ototoi,
Ototoi, tra-la-la, tra-la-la.*

¹ Mr. Turner mentions dromonds and triremes, though I don't believe triremes were invented in the Homeric period. I put in penteconter and catafract because they also are very old kinds of ships and because they sound so beautiful.



180 17

MR. EZRA POUND RECOUNTS TO MR. W. H. DAVIES HIS
EXPERIENCES ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY

THE ROVERS

(Mr. Ezra Pound, the American troubadour, has an unexpected meeting with Mr. W. H. Davies, the English tramp poet, whose simple rustic muse is so justly admired.)

SCENE.—*A platform at Charing Cross
Metropolitan Station*

MR. POUND (*emerging from a throng of passengers and addressing the station roof*).

Lo, I am weary of travel,
And the reading of many notices has
tired my eyes

Until they see nothing but dots . . .

. Bah !

Little red lamp words pointing me
onwards,

Little green lamp words pointing me
onwards,

Little white lamp words pointing me
onwards,

Onwards and onwards

. Ai-ee !

I have sung rondels in many cities

Because they delighted my heart,
All about Ysolt and Audiart,
Loosely adapting from lots of originals.

I am a jongleur and free of the world,
Yet nevertheless

I have lost my way on the Underground line.

MR. W. H. DAVIES (*likewise emerging from the throng*).

Are you looking for the Bakerloo ?

MR. E. P. I am.

MR. W. H. D. So am I too.

I also am a poet, and I thirst
For flowers and clouds and birds and
buds and hares ;

I do not understand these moving
stairs

That one must get off with the right
foot first.

When I see cows chewing quite
quietly,

With wet pink lips——

MR. E. P. (*interrupting in the rather unusual manner of "The Seafarer," circa 800*).

Song space a moment seek I your
grace for,

While I point out how perfectly
poisonous

Railfare down here is.

Bitter boot-pains have I abided
Woeful wind-loss and whangs in the
waistcoat

And eke in the sides oft. A moment
ago I

Nearly a new hat battered to bits had
In the stour¹ stamped on; fain
would I stick steel

Through the Directors. (*He pauses.*)

MR. W. H. D. (*hopefully*). Hear how my friend
the jongleur sings!

I too have suffered many things;
At Oxford Circus I have known
What townmen call the "stentor-
phone,"

Most like a hive wherein are bees
Which told me to "Keep moving,
please,"

And made me from my skin to leap
Higher than lambs do round calm
sheep.

When I reflect on caddis-worms——

MR. E. P. (*not to be denied and overbearing
him*).

Hung hard to high straps, where hot
the air is,

There I heard nought save "Whew,
whew!" and "Ow dear!"

¹ Early English.

“ Golly ! ” “ Sardines ! ” “ Get out
at Victoria ! ”

Rotten romances were for my reading
Bought at the bookstalls (none were
Ballate),

Seen over shoulders as sadly I
swayed there,

Scent of some bad kind abundantly
breathing ;

Bits of tobacco and match-heads
bestrewed me ;

Flecked was my collar ; full often
some Bolshevik

Blew smoke about me.

MR. W. H. D. (*feeling that they are not getting
much further and pointing to a chocolate-
stall*).

That is a nice girl over there ;
How prettily she tilts her head
aside

As birds in spring do on bent sprays ;
Perhaps, if we approach her, she will
guide

Our footsteps through this spiteful
maze.

MR. E. P. (*approaching stall and singing in a
rich baritone*).

Sith in sooth you wish me well,
Balatetta, Balatetta,

My white, my slender, my cruelle——

MR. W. H. D. Stop ! I can do this so much better.

(Addresses girl, who seems slightly alarmed, in a soothing manner.)

Molly, so fair of face and form,
The dainty comfits on your stall
Would scarcely make you seem more
sweet

Suppose you were to eat them all ;
Give me your answer plain and true,
How shall we find the Bakerloo ?

(She points the way.)

Exeunt arm-in-arm, MR. W. H. DAVIES silent but triumphant, MR. EZRA POUND singing lustily and incorrigibly in the manner of a Villonaud :

Drink we a skoal¹ for the leathern
thong !

Tube-mates merry and stout and
strong,

And this be the strain of our dangling-
song

That Hell² burn all the Management
long !

(His voice dies away.)

A PORTER. Lor lumme !

¹ Early English.

² Plain English.

FLOWERS

(This is an exercise in the simple cottage style in verse, which Mr. Edmund Blunden, to name no others, writes so well. One of the great advantages of writing this kind of verse is that nothing whatever happens, and that it enables one to bring in the names of so many flowers, which everybody likes. It is a mistake, however, to suppose, as many poets do, that all flowers in homely English gardens have names like love-in-a-mist, sweet-william and bachelor's button. Far from it. I have tried therefore to make my little list more catholic, so that it may appeal not only to sentimentalists, but to those who have gardens of their own.)

THE old couple sat in their old chairs
In the warm cottage garden facing south,
Where the small pathway had been set with
stones,
And little crops of stonecrop cropped between.
Long hours they sat on all fair-weather days,
Watching the white-winged cabbage butter-
flies
That danced among the cabbages and
flowers,

Old English flowers with pleasant old-world names :

Lupins and pæonies and violas,
Oenothera taraxifolia,
Penstemons, aquilegia and pinks,
And lilium umbellatum. Purple stocks
Mingled their fragrance with late gilliflowers
And seedling antirrhinums : and there grew
Tall, hairy-stemmed, althæa rosæa
With heart-shaped, crenate, seven-angled
leaves,
And digitalis that the children love :
Stenactis speciosa, leucheras,
And geum (Mrs. Bradshaw). Now and then
A blackbird piped from the old apple-tree,
A scarlet pearmain which was fruiting well :
Or a pert wagtail hopped upon the path,
And scarcely seemed to mind the old cat Tib
Sleeping beside their feet. So this old pair,
Dreaming at moments of their distant youth,
But oftener taking credit for the flowers
Which visitors who passed before the gate
Not seldom paused to notice and admire
—Especially the blue delphiniums,
Which made a splendid show till late July—
Sat qualifying for the Dunmow fitch
On all bright mornings, happy and content,
Though sometimes sadly bothered by the
flies.



THE HUMANITARIAN POET SYMPATHIZES WITH A
WOUNDED SNAIL

THE SNAIL

(While we are dealing with the rustic muse it might be as well, perhaps, to discuss the kind of poetry which depends on the exploitation on animal life. Some time ago I read a very fine poem by Mr. Ralph Hodgson, entitled "The Bull," and ever since then I have been longing to write one myself on the same theme. Unfortunately I have no bulls, so I have had to content myself with a study of the only horned live-stock on my premises, which are snails. A friend to whom I have shown the verses which follow tells me that my natural history is entirely wrong, and that snails do not behave in the manner that I have described. I cannot help that. After all, I am trying to write poetry, not farming.)

SEE the sick and wounded snail,
Sick in mind and body both,
Travelling through the undergrowth
Of asparagus and kale,
Exiled from the herd (or horde)
Where he once was overlord.

See him as his eyeballs glaze ;
Nasty sorts of flies and things,
Such as every poet brings
Into poems nowadays,
Buzz about the eyes and tail
Of this old unhappy snail.

Ants arise to greet the dawn,
Beetles burnish up their mail,
But this old unhappy snail
Creeps towards the croquet lawn,
Where the loathly blackbird jumps,
Looking out for slithery lumps.

He recalls the moment when
Long ago, a thing uncouth,
He arrived without a tooth,
Youngest of a batch of ten.
(Snails recall their infancy
Far more brightly than do we.)

How he gambolled round about,
Always at his mother's side,
Filled with lustihood and pride,
Feeding upon Brussels-sprout,
Turnip-tops and cauliflower.
(Pity him in his lone hour !)

Oft in those remembered morns
With his tiny friends at play
He would butt, and so would they,
Making trial of his horns,
Butt until he felt unwell
And retired into his shell.

Till at last his hour occurred ;
 Fiercely then, and roaring loud,
 He attacked the leader proud,
Chieftain of the hornéd herd,
Whilst the lady snails looked on,
Smiling at their paragon.

Foaming at the lips with slime,
 Each the hated foe assails
 (Battles between rival snails
Occupy no end of time) ;
Butting hard but butting slow,
These went on two weeks or so.

See him victor at the last ;
 See the victim creep away,
 Tameless even in decay,
From the treacherous herd outcast,
Whilst the hero of our plot
Stands the head-snail of the lot.

Stands resplendent in his pride
 Waving to and fro his horns ;
 Not a beetle but he scorns,
Not an earthworm far and wide
But he tosses from his path,
Bellowing in berserk wrath.

Now how altered ! Now he's been
Broken like the one before ;
All his face is smeared with gore ;
Showing undisguised chagrin
He is crawling, as I said,
Through the vegetable bed.

Soon to meet the blackbird grim
Perching on the fateful tree,
While the last snail (Number Three),
Having now defeated him,
Lords it, till in turn he fails,
And a fourth——

Oh ! —— these snails !



▲ MODERN POET REFLECTS MOURNFULLY ON AN OLD,
OLD, EMPTY HOUSE

THE OLD SILENT HOUSE

(It would be very improper in a work of this kind to omit an instance of a poem about an old silent deserted house with nobody inside it. Almost all modern poets write poems about this kind of house, —poems of a haunting, wistful sadness which give you a kind of eerie feeling. In order to catch the right spirit I went to look at an old house myself, so you may be quite sure there is no artifice whatever in these lines. I ought to have said that a poem about an old house should never be divided into stanzas, but run straight on ; that the length of the lines should vary in order to increase the sadness, and that by the end of it the reader should be in tears.)

NOBODY comes to the old house,
It is so old and still,
The weeds have grown in the garden,
The steps are damp and chill :
There is rust on the old gate-hinges,
And never the song of a bird
From any bush in the garden
Or from any tree is heard.
Not an eye peeps out of the windows ;
Shuttered and fast as tombs
Are the ample bed, reception,
Billiard and servants' rooms.

The rose-bloom falls in the long grass
Gold-starred with the buttercup ;
There is no sound in the pantry
Of anyone washing up ;
But the creeping mouse in the wainscot
Rustles with paws like silk,
And the spider spins uncaring ;
No one with milk
Opens the gate of the garden
Or knocks at the old side-door,
Or pushes under the front one
Circulars any more.
Only Silence, she only
Over the grass and stones
Creeps, and a little whisper,
And a little wind that moans.
She only touches the threshold
With shadowy light footfalls,
But nobody answers the front door
When Silence calls.
She treads on the musty landings,
She mounts the echoless stair,
But nobody welcomes Silence,
For no one is there.
Only invisible watchers
With sightless eyes regard
The coming and going of Silence—
She leaves no card ;
She passes out through the great hall,
Seeing no coat nor hat ;

The house is entirely empty—
 You all grasp that.
Oh where, oh where are the people
 Whose voices, echoing gay,
Once made the old house cheerful ?
 Why have they gone away ?
Do they know that the lawn is stifled
 With the buttercups' starry gold,
And the bathroom taps are mildewed,
 Hot and cold ?
Sorrowful is this old house
 That holds me here with the spell
Of all sad things and all old things
 Too sad to tell.
For not only the house is empty
 And seems to dream,
But down there in the old garden
 Strangely there gleam
The lid of a metal saucepan
 And a broken china vase
And a couple of disused kettles
 In the long rank grass ;
And hard by the moss-damp doorstep
 Is a tin that once held fruit,
And under the rhododendrons
 Someone has thrown a boot.
Sadder to me seems an old house
 Where memory walks and weeps,
And out of the darkened windows
 No eye of watcher peeps,

When men cast forth disused things
 Out of the next-door plot,
And in the old silent garden
 Rubbish is being shot.



A KANGAROO EXPLAINS THE RIGOURS OF HIS WORKING-DAY

KANGAROOS : OR THE SIX O'CLOCK CLOSURE

(The Poet-Laureate is inspired to topical verse once more by the Australians' decision not to play cricket later than 6 p.m.)

WE TO THE AUSTRALIAN XI

BEAUTIFUL are the provinces from
whence ye come,
And lively with opossums are those woods of
gum,

And parrots' song.

What makes ye grow so tall ? Ah ! would we
had them here,

Men of such beetling form, or standing sheer
Seven feet long !

THE AUSTRALIAN XI TO US

Nay, terrible is the strain of first-class cricket,
Playing all day long we could not stick it,

No, not for nuts ;

Ah ! surely we shall die in the dim field
profound

Or do upon the crease a death-pale swound
For all our guts.

Five hours—no more—in the enraptured eyes
of men

We bat, we bowl, we field ; and then

From the green lawn

Full of heroic deeds and white-robed limbs at
play

Long ere the light gives out we fade away,

And stumps are drawn.

THE TWO SHEPHERDS

(I have tried to imagine in these lines a sort of idyllic meeting between Mr. Thomas Hardy, the doyen of English letters, and Mr. Alfred Noyes, who came back to visit us this year, wearing so many laurels, from the U.S.A. It takes place, I suppose, somewhere in Dorset, and grazing or lying under trees near by must be imagined a quantity of sheep, half of them wearing expressions of sentimental joy, and half of deep though philosophical gloom.)

MR. ALFRED NOYES (*touching gently his Arabian zither*).

Shade is here, and hedge-rows trailing.

MR. THOMAS HARDY (*coming in with the bass viol*).

Rest methinks were not amiss.

(*They sit down.*)

MR. ALFRED NOYES (*brightly*). I have a song to sing O.

MR. THOMAS HARDY (*rather gloomily*). Sing me your song O.

MR. ALFRED NOYES. I call it "SAILING." It runs like this:—

Cloud upon cloud the golden galleons
glittering over the waves and
doubling

Stroke upon stroke in a lilac haze and
line upon line

Swept the seas till they reached the
shore at last of the sweet untroub-
ling

Bubbling meadows of Arcady faint
with asphodel, blue with pine—

Drake (ho ! Drake !) and his conquering
name,

Nelson and Trafalgar !

Down through the woods Eurydice came
To Orpheus, star unto star.

Satin of sails on a silky sky

Dewdrunk since the world began,

We'll make with Drake to the Dear
Bye-Bye

And the dreams of old Japan.

D'you like my song ?

MR. THOMAS HARDY. Not much. It seems
to me

Sad interblend of flounce with flummery.
Let me sing something to you of my own,
Rayed with Eternity and Time's deep
moan.

A little satire of oblitterate life,
Such as outlooms in Wessex:—

THE FALSE WIFE

The ghost of the man who had killed his
new-got bride

On their wedding-eve, and had wived the
gibbet-tree,

Crept, as his wont was, close to her grave's
side,

In the moon's apogee.

She had said, "I loved another prior to you
Whom I met at a watering-place on the
Southern coast."

So he drew his rusting sabre and stabbed
her through,

And now he was ghost to her ghost.

But to-night he found her not. And to his
unsight

It seemed that this was perhaps a bitterer
pain

Than when he had found her false, a new
wed wight,

That she should be false again.

For he knew, not knowing, yet sure that the
spectre jade

Who had tricked him so in her blooth
with a woman's guile

Far off from the charnel vault and the
tomb had wayed

To a different domicile.

Down the eweleaze she had fared and passed
the door

Of the Old Green Man to the hollow that
was beyond,

To house with the ghost of her former para-
mour

Who had fallen, for spite, in a pond.

MR. ALFRED NOYES. It seems to me your song
is much too sad.

MR. THOMAS HARDY. Life is like that.
Ghast, weariful and bad.

MR. ALFRED NOYES. Well, let's try something
then in unison

To make things cheerful,—something with
a run.

MR. THOMAS HARDY. Illuding though the
woof of tears

MR. ALFRED NOYES. *Robin Hood's in Sher-
wood, Sherwood,*

MR. THOMAS HARDY. A Nescience unfriends
the years,

MR. ALFRED NOYES. *And Friar Tuck's in
Sherwood.*

MR. THOMAS HARDY. Perfectly rotten !

MR. ALFRED NOYES. Well, let's try once
more.

MR. THOMAS HARDY. And keep together.

MR. ALFRED NOYES. And please mind the
score.

BOTH TOGETHER.

Through the shady glens of Ida buds of
amaranth are peeping,

And a pirate fleet's a-sailing on the
sunny purple main,

But Corporal Henry Tullidge lies in Mell-
stock Churchyard sleeping,

Out of pain,

Out of pain.

Oh it's good to lie at Mellstock when the
moon is on the tombstones

(Falling silver on the tombstones)

Falling silver on the tomb of Corporal
Tullidge,

Who'll never go a-vlirting or a-
vigting

With Boney again.

MR. THOMAS HARDY. That's much better.

Come on.

BOTH TOGETHER.

Golden on the mountains is the morning
incense-laden

And cherry blooms are blowing in a
garden many-hued,

There's another grave at Mellstock. 'Tis
the earth-nook of a maiden

The Corporal wooed,

The Corporal wooed.

Oh it's good to be at Mellstock when the
moon is on the tombstones

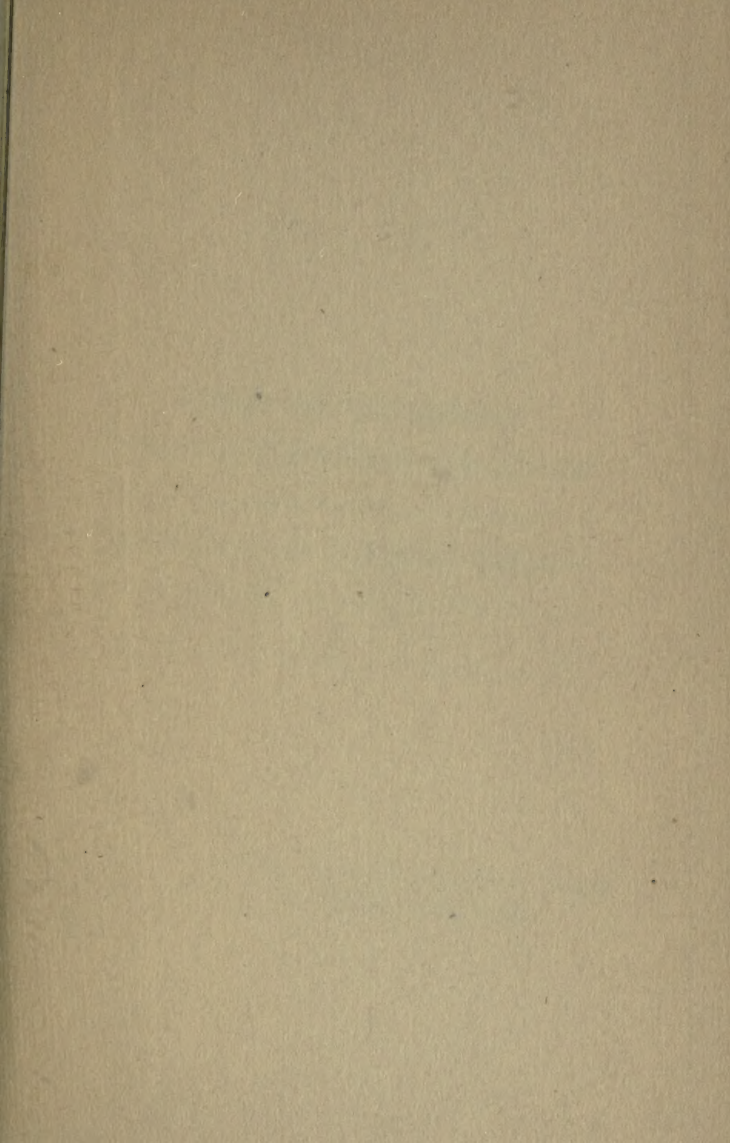
(Falling silver on the tombstones),
On the tomb of Corporal Tullidge and his
maiden

Who wur dancing of a reel upon his
deathday

Wi' Varmer Jude.

(They are left singing.)

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